HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR RADIO SERIES (original scripts)

Series: 1.
05. The Hancock Festival.

TONY HANCOCK

With

MOIRA LISTER, BILL KERR & SIDNEY JAMES

In
"HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR"

o

No.5

Dramatis Personae

Tony Hancock (a waif) ..... Mr. Anthony Alouitious
St. John Hancock II

Moira Lister (Tony's girlfriend) ..... Miss Moira Lister

Bill Kerr (Tony's best friend)..... Mr. Bill Kerr

Sidney James (a friend?)..... Mr. Sidney James

Alan Simpson

Spike Milligan ..... A lost Goon

INCIDENTAL MUSIC COMPOSED BY WALLY STOTT and RECORDED BY THE BBC AUGMENTED REVUE ORCHESTRA, CONDUCTED BY HARRY RABINOWITZ

SCRIPT: RAY GALTON & ALAN SIMPSON

ANNOUNCER: ADRIAN WALLER

PRODUCED BY - DENNIS MAIN WILSON

REHEARSALS: FRIDAY 26th NOVEMBER 1954: 3.00pm. CAST READ THROUGH
Listening Room

SATURDAY 27th NOVEMBER 1954: 11.00am. CAST - CAMDEN

RECORDING: SATURDAY 27th NOVEMBER 1954: 4.30 - 5.15pm. CAMDEN

TRANSMISSION: TUESDAY 30th. NOVEMBER 1954: 9.30-10.00pm. LIGHT & GOS

REPEATS: SATURDAY 4th DECEMBER 1954: 10.30 - 11.00am. GOS
SUNDAY 5th DECEMBER 1954: 2.13 - 3.45pm. GOS

CONTINUITY: THIS IS THE BBC LIGHT PROGRAMME
(Live)

GRAMS: (ON RED LIGHT) "HANCOCK OPENING" - PART 1

ADRIAN: We present Tony Hancock with Moira Lister, Bill Kerr and Sidney James in….

GRAMS: "HANCOCK OPENING" - PART 2

TONY: (ALL EXCITED - BREATH) "Hancock's Half Hour".

GRAMS: "HANCOCK OPENING" - PART 3

ADRIAN: As listeners to the Light Programme will know, the BBC is currently presenting a festival of the works of that great story teller W. Somerset Maugham - which has created tremendous interest among listeners throughout the country. It has even, apparently made an impression on Tony Hancock. Since <u>he</u> heard the first of these programmes, Tony has become a different man….

GRAMS: "HANCOCK THEME" (Up & Under)

FADE IN

MOIRA: Just exactly what is going on Bill?

BILL: Don't ask me Moira. All I know is I got a phone call from Tony asking me to come round straight away.

MOIRA: I wonder what it's all about?

BILL: I wish I knew. I haven't seen him. - he hasn't left his room for days.

MOIRA: (ANXIOUS) I hope he hasn't got wedged in again.

BILL: No - he's got his typewriter up there. He's been typing day and night non - stop.

MOIRA: Well that explains it - it's getting near Christmas - time for his begging letters to go out.

BILL: No, there's more to it than that. He's got some idea running through his head.

MOIRA: (THOUGHTFUL) Yes…. Mind you, it's got plenty of space to move around in.

BILL: He was acting perfectly normally right up until last Sunday afternoon.

MOIRA: And what happened?

BILL: Nothing really. We were just sitting quietly listening to the radio - one of those Somerset Maugham plays they're broadcasting - and it seemed to have some affect on him. When it was all over he just sat there - staring into space, a strange light in his eyes, his mouth wide open.

MOIRA: Hmmm - remember the last time he looked like that? He was lying flat on his back underneath a beer barrel with the tap turned on.

BILL: Yeah, but this was different. Suddenly he jumped up, grabbed his typewriter, went up to his room and I haven't seen him since.

MOIRA: I just don't understand it. What can he be -

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

TONY: Greetings.

BILL: Oh...morning Tub.

MOIRA: Hallo Tony.

TONY: Be seated. Pray forgive this untimely hour, but I have summoned you here today so that you may be the first to hear the momentous news that is destined to surprise all my friends.

BILL: You're not starting work?

TONY: You're quite right, I am not starting work.

MOIRA: Tony, before we go any further, why have you locked yourself in your room all week?

TONY: I'm coming to that. For the past several and a half days, I have been giving vent to all the creative histrionic genius that for many years throughout my young life has been burning inside my tortured soul like the very clappers. In short, I have been writing. I am now an author - a litterateur. I have given birth to a book. It will shake the literary world.

MOIRA: It won't pass unnoticed in the medical world.

TONY: That's it - laugh at me. I don't care. They laughed at Puccini, they laughed at Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and all them other great painters - but the proof rests in the great work I have produced. Behold - the fruits of me artistic labour. Me manuscript.

BILL: Let's see. (READS) Ninety seven short stories from the pen of A. Somerset Hancock.

MOIRA: Somerset? Oh no, that's going a bit too far.

TONY: Alright then. Seeing as I come from Bairmingham, we'll change it. A. Staffordshire Hancock.

BILL: Tell me. Staff, just what inspired you to do this?

TONY: Many things. The burning desire to create a great work of art, the long - felt ambition to accomplish something that will be handed down to posterity, the need to express me innermost soul and impart a profound message for the benefit of mankind - and lastly, I've just found out how much lob Somerset Maugham cops every year.

BILL: So?

TONY: So, I'm having a go.

MOIRA: Don't be ridiculous. Somerset Maugham's a master of the English language.

TONY: Listen, I can write English as good as what he can.

BILL: Oh, even betterer.

TONY: Well certainly not worser. Don't worry, I'll have the lot, you watch. Nobel prize, literary luncheons and a dirty great villa on the French Revery, right in the middle of the old Coat Dazzer.

MOIRA: Just a minute genius - who is going to publish these stories?

Ah! No - one. They're for broadcasting. I'm doing them on me next radio show. If the BBC can do a five week Festival of Somerset Maugham's stories, they can find somewhere to put mine.

BILL: I'm sure they will.

TONY: Well exactly. First the "Somerset Maugham Festival" and now the "Staffordshire Hancock Booze Up" - three of me best short stories adapted for radio. Which brings us to the question of casting. Now, I've been very fair about this - I don't want to be greedy - I mean you know me - so I've divided the parts up equally. Each of us has the same amount to do. Here you are, one page for you, Kerr -

BILL: Oh…..thanks.

TONY: Half a page for you Moira.

MOIRA: Thank you.

TONY: Now all we have to - ….hallo, where's page sixty seven of my lot? Who's got page sixty seven?

BILL: There it is - sticking out from behind page ninety four.

TONY: Oh yes. Now, we'll need someone else. Three people's not enough to do three plays.

EFFECTS: (KNOCK ON DOOR)

BILL: Come in.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

SIDNEY: Ah, just the boys I'm looking for.

BILL: Sidney!

TONY: Mr. James, what are you doing here? I've told you before not to come round here in daylight.

SIDNEY: That's a fine way to talk to your bookmaker. I've got news for you.

TONY: What?

SIDNEY: You know that horse I told you to put thirty quid on - that cast iron, dead cert, can't lose, surefire, odds on favourite... the one you said wouldn't win?

TONY: Well?

SIDNEY: It didn't. Thirty nicker you owe me.

TONY: Look, I can't pay you now - you'll have to wait till me stories are published.

SIDNEY: When will that be?

TONY: As soon as they've been broadcast. When the publishers hear 'em they'll be round me like flies round a rubbish heap.

SIDNEY: I couldn't have put it better myself. So you're going to do some broadcasting eh? Tell you what I'll do. We'll scrub round the thirty nicker if you give me a part in the broadcast. I've always fancied myself as an actor.

TONY: You? An actor?

SIDNEY: 'Course. I was the star of the Dartmoor Follies of 1929. Ran for fifteen years with the same cast. Ah - those were the days. All the fans waiting outside the prison gates with their fingerprint books.

TONY: Alright then, we'll give it a try. Here's your part. Right, we're all set now - history is about to be made. A new genius is about to be launched onto the literary sea.

BILL: I only hope it's more than two hundred miles off the coast of Peru.

TONY: Ah, can't you just see it. The Staffordshire Hancock Festival of 1954.

GRAMS: "KING TONY THE ONE"

ADRIAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the BBC is proud to announce that they have obtained, at very little expense, the broadcasting rights to the complete works of Mr. Anthony Staffordshire Hancock, the unknown author of world wide obscurity, whose works have been translated into no less than one language - English. And so ladies and gentlemen, we now present a trio of three short stories entitled - "Triplets".

GRAMS: "OPENING THEME" - PART 2

ADRIAN: ...And first we have - "The Moon and Fourpence Halfpenny".

TONY: Even in those days - Income Tax.

GRAMS : "ALOHA HE"

BILL: (TERRIBLY ENGLISH.) It was in Tahiti where I first met Paul Goggin. He was a great painter who had turned his back on civilization and gone to the South Seas where he could paint in peace. We met quite by accident. A boat had just docked and the tourists were amusing themselves throwing small coins into the water and watching the native boys dive in to retrieve them.

EFFECTS: (SPLASHES AND SHRIEKS OF DELIGHT. MIXED - YOUNG & OLD)

TONY: Good afternoon.

BILL: Oh….good afternoon.

TONY: Your first visit?

BILL: Yes.

TONY: I think you'll like it.

BILL: I hope so.

TONY: It grows on one.

BILL: Really?

TONY: You find it gets a hold on you.

BILL: Does it?

TONY: After a time you never want to leave.

BILL: No?

TONY: I've lived here for some years.

BILL: How I envy you.

TONY: Life takes on a new meaning here.

BILL: Yes.

TONY: You'll find it different from London.

BILL: I daresay…

TONY: The sun, the waving palms, the blue sea...it's a paradise.

BILL: Isn't it?

TONY: Oh, look - the tourists have stopped throwing coins into the water.

BILL: Yes….so they have.

TONY: Oh well...we might as well swim ashore and dry ourselves…. (FADE)

BILL: That then was my first meeting with Paul Goggin. He'd lived on the island for 40 years, living on cocoanuts. He's eaten so many cocoanuts, every time he stuck his head out of a window, someone threw a ball at it. He was desperately poor. Many a long hour I spent with him in his rude cabin, looking at his rude paintings. He was very proud of his work…

FADE IN

TONY: Look - what do you think of this one? I only painted it last week. I call it "Still Life".

BILL: Oh, yes. Two apple cores, a banana skin and a pile of orange peel.

TONY: One gets...hungry.

BILL: You haven't much money have you Paul?

TONY: Oh, I manage. The natives are very kind to me. They bring me food. Have another piece of arm.

BILL: Paul, why don't you give all this up? Go back to London - make a fresh start.

TONY: They won't let me sell my pictures in London.

BILL: Why not?

TONY: The pavements belong to the Council. Another glass of milk?

BILL: Yes please.

TONY: I'll nip out and give the cocoanut tree a kick. Oh, it's no good, I'm a failure. Nobody wants my paintings. The spark has gone. I'm no use to anybody..nothing to offer. The world will be better off without me. I'll end it all. I'll throw myself in the sea. That's it - the sea. The sea. Goodbye.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN. SIREN. TERRIFIC CRASH. DOOR SLAMS)

TONY: The tide's out.

BILL: Paul, pull yourself together. Have you nothing to live for?

TONY: Only..Fanalia. She's a native girl - does me mending, me washing, poses for me. I'd marry her but there's the question of the...bar.

BILL: What bar?

TONY: For the wedding licence, half a bar each. You should meet Fanalia, I think you'll like her. I'll call her. (CALLS) Fanalia. Fanalia. (SHOUTS) Oi - Fanny!!

MOIRA: You called me Paul?

BILL: I gasped in amazement. She was the most beautiful creature I'd ever seen. Her dusky skin contrasted sharply with her flashing white teeth. She was dressed in typical South Sea fashion - a garland of flowers round her neck and a simple Hawaiian skirt, on which was pinned a notice. "Keep Off the Grass". Under her arm she was carrying a bundle of tattered old rags.

MOIRA: Paul, I've brought your laundry back. Oh - and I've done all the mending. I darned that great big hole in the top of your sock.

TONY: Well done, I can't get it on now.

MOIRA: Will you be wanting me to pose for you today?

TONY: Yes, I must try and get that portrait finished. Now...the pose. Ah, yes - stand in the hallway and…

BILL: I'll come with you.

MOIRA: Oh, no - we are not going to pose in the hall - together.

TONY: Quick Fanalia, the portrait. - while the muse is still with me. Sit down. That's it. Now put the shield by your side. Perfect. Now hold the spear like this. That's it. Don't move. Where's me brush. Bit of green. Touch of white here. Bit more green. Little more white. Another touch of green. Sign it. There - finished.

BILL: Why, that's perfect. What are you going to call it?

TONY: A pound note. Dry it in front of the fire and nip out and get some grub.

EFFECTS: (KNOCK ON DOOR)

SIDNEY: (OFF MIKE. CALL) Anybody in?

MOIRA: Paul, it's the Governor - Lord James of Whitechapel.

TONY: What can he want with me? The Governess hasn't been here for weeks. Ask him in.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

MOIRA: Will you step this way your Lordship.

SIDNEY: Here - you - the one in the corduroy sarong. Are you the geezer what paints?

TONY: Paul Goggin at your service.

SIDNEY: Well, listen Gog, I've heard a lot about you see. They say you're quite a dab hand with the old brush.

TONY: I have me moments. Have a butchers at some of me canvasses. Here's one I done that might interest you. Self portrait.

SIDNEY: Who of?

TONY: (SCORNFUL) Who of? Self portrait… Blimey, some mothers don't half get lumbered. Who of? I'm not quite sure - let's have a look. Oh, yes of course, it's me.

SIDNEY: It looks like Gregory Peck.

TONY: I can dream.

SIDNEY: Here - I like that one hanging up on the wall over there. That Tahiti street scene. The palm trees, the people, the ships in the harbour. Looks almost lifelike.

TONY: It should do, that's the window.

SIDNEY: Look, I'll tell you what I want. I've got a commision for you. I want you to paint for me. Government House looks a bit bare. It could do with a bit of brightening up.

MOIRA: Paul, this is your big chance. Government House. All the influential people of the island will see your work. You will be famous.

TONY: Yes - I always knew I could do it. You see. I'll be as good a painter as that little bloke, Jose Ferrer. Quick - me paints - me brushes - to work.

ORCHESTRA: LINK

BILL: From that day, Paul was a changed man. He painted furiously day and night - working like a man possessed. I shall never forget that fat little figure standing there in his brown smock and bare legs. He looked like a toffee apple with two sticks.

MOIRA: On and on he worked, the deft bold strokes of his brush pouring out all the creative genius that had burned within him for years. Painting all the time painting. By this time he was working so quickly we couldn't supply him with paint fast enough.

TONY: That tube of green paint you bought this morning - it's no good. I can't paint with it. What's it called.

MOIRA: Let's see. (READS) Chlorophyll toothpaste.

BILL: It was fantastic to watch him. I've never seen a man paint with such speed and precision. And then finally, three months later…

FADE IN SLIGHTLY

SIDNEY: Oi, Goggin - haven't you finished that painting yet?

TONY: Don't stop me - I must work fast before the light fades. I must catch all the delicate tones - the pastel shades, the vermillions, the ultramarines, all blending together into one glorious harmony of colour. Just a few more strokes. There you are - the Master has finished.

MOIRA: Paul, it's beautiful - your greatest work yet.

BILL: The touch of a genius.

TONY: What do <u>you</u> think Lord James?

SIDNEY: Marvellous. Marvellous. Best painting I've seen for years. Just one thing.

TONY: What?

SIDNEY: How much do you charge to put the wallpaper up as well?

GRAMS: "CLOSING THEME"

TONY: On behalf of the actors and myself, thank you. There will now be a short interlude before our next offering, to enable us to shift the furniture round and make a quick change of costumes. Buns and lemonade can be had from the Vicar at the trestle table at the back of the hall. Thank you.

EFFECTS: (ROAR OF SEA. HOLD FOR SOME TIME. THEN ALARM BELL AS ON TELEVISION AT END OF INTERVAL)

TONY: (CALLS) Interval over. We copped this idea off Television. Right - all set? Here we go. Music please.

GRAMS: "KING TONY THE ONE"

ADRIAN: Continuing the Staffordshire Hancock Festival of 1954, we now present story number 2 - "The Casino".

GRAMS: "BAL MUSETTE"

BILL: I knew the Honourable Reggie Faversham only by name until that fateful winter in Monte Carlo in 1947. He had been left a great deal of money and a great deal of suspicion by his father the Earl, who had died in rather mysterious circumstances the year before. He had been knocked down by an unidentified car when leaving his West End Club. Two days later, Reggie drove up to the funeral in his usually immaculate new sports car...with a battered mudguard. I met him at Monte Carlo, where his extravagant gambling soon became the talk of the Casino. On the night in question, I accompanied him to the gaming rooms...and as we entered…

FRENCHMAN: Ah, good evening messieurs.

BILL: Good evening.

TONY: Bon jew.

FRENCHMAN: You are here to visit the gambling tables again monsieur?

TONY: Of course.

FRENCHMAN: Allow me to take your hat.

TONY: Thank you.

FRENCHMAN: Your cloak.

TONY: Merki.

FRENCHMAN: Your gloves...and your cane. Thank you monsieur.

TONY: What a nice man. Who is he?

BILL: No - one knows, but he's rapidly becoming the best dressed man in Monte Carlo.

TONY: Ah well, c'est Izzy bon. Come - to the gambling tables - I have a new system to try out.

BILL: What is it?

TONY: First I back numero un, then deux, then trois, then quatre, then cinq, and then….six.

BILL: Why?

TONY: I'll have to, I won't have any lob left after that lot. Ah, here's the roulette room.
EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN. CHATTERING CROWD)

CROUPIER: Messieurs et mesdames, faites vos jeux s'il vous plaît. Faites vos jeux.

TONY: Garkon, here's forty thousand pounds - bring me some chips.

CROUPIER: Certainly. Anything else?

TONY: Yes - two bits of rock salmon and a lump of skate.

MOIRA: (SEDUCTIVE - FRENCH) Hallo cherie.

BILL: I turned round to look at the owner of the voice. To my relief it was a woman. She was wearing an evening gown that started where most people's finished. She stood there with one hand resting on her hip - the cigarette in her holder smoldered not an inch from my face. This intrigued me. She was standing on the other side of the table. She spoke to Reggie.

MOIRA: Cherie, you must be an Englishman - no?

TONY: Yes. How can you tell?

MOIRA: Simple. I once saw you in the front row of the Folies Bergere.

TONY: Well?

MOIRA: If you were a Frenchman, you would have been up on the stage. Permit me to introduce myself. I am Michelle du Versois, Comtesse de Versois.

BILL: This evening gown was cut so low I could see at a glance she wasn't the Barefoot Contessa.

MOIRA: I have been watching you these last few nights. I have noticed you have…(TONY COUGHS QUIETLY)...is my cigarette holder bothering you?

TONY: No - just lean it up against the wall, that'll be alright.

MOIRA: As I was saying, I have noticed that you have been losing very heavily at the tables.

TONY: Oh, I don't know - only about twenty or thirty thousand pounds - plus me twenty five quid travelling allowance.

MOIRA: You have...more money?

TONY: Yersssss. I've got another four and a half million what me old man left me. 'Cos he had a good job- he was Bernard Docker's chauffeur. A few crafty scrapings off the front bumper - soon mounts up. Then there's me -

EFFECTS: (REVOLVER SHOT OFF)

TONY: What was that?

MOIRA: Take no notice. It happens all the time in Monte Carlo. Some poor devil loses everything he possesses and so...pouf! No money, no worries, no disgrace…

TONY: No head.

MOIRA: Precisely.

BILL: Reggie, have you heard the news. Young Algy Blackworth is losing ten thousand at the roulette table. Could you lend him some?

TONY: No, he's got plenty.

MOIRA: Come cherie, perhaps I can help you win some of your money back. There is a very rich American in the next room. He loves gambling with the cards. He doesn't mind how much he loses. I could arrange for you to play with him.

TONY: No, not me - never gamble with cards. Too chancy. Lose too much money. Find someone else. I'm not touching the cards.

MOIRA: His eyesight's not very good.

TONY: Bags first deal.

MOIRA: Wait here, I'll go and tell the american you're ready.

EFFECTS: (CHATTERING UP. DOOR OPEN & SHUT. CHATTERING CUT OFF DEAD)

MOIRA: (COCKNEY) Oi, Max.

SIDNEY: Hallo.

MOIRA: I've got a mug outside - loaded with lolly.

SIDNEY: Good girl Daisy. Send him in.

MOIRA: Half a mo.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

MOIRA: (FRENCH AGAIN) Monsieur Faversham - would you care to step in here.

TONY: Certainly. Where's the cards?

SIDNEY: (AMERICAN) Waal, Mr. Faversham, this is indeed an honour.

TONY: Charmed. What's trumps?

SIDNEY: My name is Hiram P. Gluckenheimer. I'm in oil.

TONY: So am I - Fifteenth oil of Faversham Castle.

SIDNEY: I understand you're looking for a game of cards.

TONY: That's right.

SIDNEY: Good. How about a round of gin rummy to start with.

TONY: Good idea. (CALLS) Waiter - three gin rummy's please. Not too much rum in mine.

BILL: I say Reggie, young Algy Blackworth's losing <u>twenty</u> thousand at the roulette table. Do lend him some.

TONY: No, he's still got plenty.

SIDNEY: Waal, Mr. Faversham, what game are we going to play?

TONY: Oh, i don't mind, I'm a hard gambling man. Snap, Beat Your Neighbours Out of Doors, anything you like.

SIDNEY: Poker. Minimum stake - twenty five thousand dollars. I'll deal.

TONY: Shuffle 'em first.

SIDNEY: Right.

EFFECTS: (VERY SLICK FAN SHUFFLE. TWICE. SEVERAL CARDS DEALT VERY QUICKLY AND VERY EXPERTLY)

TONY: Hmmm - you've played this before haven't you.

SIDNEY: Now what on earth makes you think that?

TONY: Oh, nothing. It's just that I haven't seen anybody shuffle with their feet before.

SIDNEY: Have a look at your cards.

MOIRA: Do you mind if I stand behind you monsieur?

TONY: No, no, you might bring me luck. Let's see what I've got. (TO HIMSELF) Ah, good - a Full House.

MOIRA: (DELIBERATELY) Queueing...all...parts.

TONY: Eh?

MOIRA: Nothing, just talking to myself.

SIDNEY: I'll tell you what, save time. I bet you three hundred thousand dollars I've got a better hand than you.

TONY: Alright. I've got a full house.

SIDNEY: So have I.

TONY: I've got <u>two</u> aces and <u>three</u> kings.

SIDNEY: Bad luck - I've got <u>three</u> aces and <u>two</u> kings.

TONY: Ah well, we can't always win can we. My deal. One, two, three…(MUMBLES) ...There. Let's see what I've got this time. (TO HIMSELF) Ooooh wonderful - three kings.

MOIRA: (WHISTLES "WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE")

TONY: Madam - please stop whistling - you're putting the gentleman off.

SIDNEY: This time I've got five hundred thousand dollars that says I've got a better hand than you have.

TONY: Alright. There. Three kings.

SIDNEY: Bad luck, I've got three jacks.

TONY: Wait a minute, kings is higher than jacks.

SIDNEY: Not in America son, everybody's equal.

TONY: Ah, democracy - wonderful thing.

SIDNEY: You called - you lose.

TONY: But you called.

SIDNEY: I've got a knife here that says you called.

TONY: Yes, so I did. You want to hold onto that knife - it's got a wonderful memory.

BILL: I say Reggie - young Algy Blackworth's lost seventy thousand pounds on the roulette table. You really must lend him some money.

TONY: Alright - where is he?

EFFECTS: (REVOLVER SHOT OFF)

BILL: He just left.

SIDNEY: My deal, I believe Mr. Faversham.

GRAMS: "ALL GOING WRONG" LINK

BILL: On they played through the night. Reggie lost a fortune with every hand. By four o'clock in the morning the American had so much money piled up in front of him, he had to make two holes to put his hands through. But still Reggie gambled, until in the cold light of dawn he stood there...with not a penny left.

SIDNEY: I'm waiting Mr. Faversham. I'm betting you a million dollars on this hand.

TONY: Alright - I'll cover it. I'll wager Faversham Castle - me estate and the family jewels. All I have left in the world.

SIDNEY: What have you got in your hand.

TONY: Too good for you. Look - four aces. Ha! Ha! I've done it. I've won!

SIDNEY: Just a minute - you haven't won. I've got three two's.

TONY: Alright, go on surprise me. How does three two's beat four aces.

SIDNEY: What's four ones?

TONY: Four.

SIDNEY: What's three two's?

TONY: Six.

SIDNEY: Six is better than four. You've lost.

TONY: Yes, but - look I don't...how can..he's right. Yes. Six <u>is</u> more than four. Well done. What am I going to do now. I'm ruined. Me money gone - the family estate gone. Everything. I'm finished.

MOIRA: Remember what I said monsieur. It happens all the time at Monte Carlo. There is only one way out.

TONY: You're right - it's the only way. I'll do it.

SIDNEY: You may borrow my gun sir.

TONY: Thank you. Goodbye Mr. Gluckenheimer.

SIDNEY: Goodbye sir.

EFFECTS: (REVOLVER SHOT. BODY SLUMPS TO FLOOR)

MOIRA: It is a great pity. He was rather nice.

TONY: Yes, he wasn't bad was he. Poker anyone?

ORCHESTRA: FINAL LINK

ADRIAN: And so we come to the last story in the Staffordshire Hancock Festival…

GRAMS: CREEP IN "ELGAR HANCOCK" UNDER

ADRIAN: A tale set in a lonely British Army garrison on the North West Frontier. A tale of British courage, guts and endurance. Ladies and gentlemen, we present - "The Outpost".

GRAMS: "ELGAR HANCOCK" TO CLIMAX
(SEGUE)

GRAMS: "INDIAN MUSIC"

BILL: I first met Lieutenant Carruthers in Bombay. He was haggling with an old Indian over the price of some cigarettes Carruthers had just sold him. The Indian had offered him two annas..but Carruthers didn't fancy either of them and walked on. I didn't meet him again until we were both posted to the same regiment during the Afghan uprising of '97. The garrison was under the command of that seasoned Afghan fighter, Captain Sid Levy.

SIDNEY: The position is serious men. The Afghans are massing for an all out attack. If we advance to meet them, we shall be massacred. If we stay here we shall be massacred..and if we retreat we shall be massacred. Now when I come back from leave, I want you men to -

BILL: I say sir, steady on sir. We're not staying here to fight the Afghans by ourselves. I want to go home too.

SIDNEY: Just as I thought - you're a coward.

BILL: Only when there's danger sir.

SIDNEY: What about you, Carruthers? You look like a brave man.

TONY: Quick, hand me a beard.

BILL: Carruthers and I weren't frightened for ourselves. You see - there was a woman in the Fort….the Colonel's daughter - Cynthia, the fairest flower of English womanhood - though at the time, she was rapidly going to seed.

TONY: Cynthia, don't you see? It's madness for you to stop here. When the Afghans catch a woman, it's a fate worse than death.

MOIRA: (POSH) Oh good, I was counting on that.

TONY: (SHOCKED) Cynthia…

MOIRA: Well none of you lot take any notice of me. That's the only reason I came out here - I thought someone might ask me to get married. I thought under the hot old Indian sun and that - might stir some of the old blood up a bit.

TONY: Cynthia, aren't you forgetting - we're British. British bred.

MOIRA: Well for heaven's sake, let's breed.

EFFECTS: (TRUMPET SOUNDS FALL IN)

SIDNEY: (OFF MIKE. SHOUTS) The Afghans are attacking. Action stations! Man the guns!

GRAMS: STIRRING LINK

BILL: The Afghan tribesmen poured down from the surrounding hills. Hordes of yelling, screaming Waziris urged on by their swarthy leader. In his bushy black beard and flowing white robes, he looked like Philip Harben standing up in bed. Undaunted, the dwindling British force fought back against overwhelming odds.

EFFECTS: (BATTLE NOISES. RICOCHETS ETC.)

TONY: Here they come again sir. Fifty thousand of the swine and only 4 of us left. There's only one thing we can do.

SIDNEY: What's that?

TONY: (SHOUTS) CHAAAARGE!!!!!!

SPIKE: (COMING ON) Major Bloodnok, Major Bloodnok sir, Major….ooooh sorry...wrong programme. Ha hum. Can't understand it .. it <u>looked</u> like the Home Service. Oh well goodbye, humper dumper dom… (GOES OFF)

EFFECTS: (DOOR SHUT)

MOIRA: Here they come again. - thousands of 'em.

EFFECTS: (SCREAMING DERVISHES & BATTLE NOISES)

SIDNEY: Don't give way men - fight back.

TONY: It's no good sir - we're beaten.

SIDNEY: Rally men. What's breaking our thin red line.

BILL: This big fat yellow bit standing next to me.

EFFECTS: (BATTLE NOISES UP)

BILL: On we fought, no hardship too great. The medical supplies were exhausted and Cynthia was tearing pieces off her clothing to bind our wounds. To make it more

interesting, Carruthers and I were shooting each other in the arms and legs. And still they came on….

EFFECTS: (BATTLE NOISES)

SIDNEY: Keep fighting men. Remember, one Englishman is worth twenty Afghans. And so…

BILL: Yes?

SIDNEY: I'm going to take one of you out and swap you.

BILL: Something's got to be done. There's only four of us left. Captain Levy, Cynthia, Carruthers and myself. Can you handle a gun Cynthia?

MOIRA: Oh yes. It won't be the first time I've cradled a warm barrel in my arms.

BILL: So it <u>was</u> you and Carruthers behind the cookhouse last night.

MOIRA: What of it. I love him, do you hear - love him. He's the bravest and most conscientious one amongst you. Why last night at the height of the attack, it was he, he alone who stayed in the cellars all night eating all the food and drinking all the wine so it wouldn't fall into the enemy's hands.

SIDNEY: That's what I call guts.

BILL: Where is Carruthers now?

MOIRA: There he is - leaning over the battlements chatting to that Afghan tribesman.

SLIGHT FADE IN

TONY: …..Of course, this isn't my first ambush you know.
ALAN: I didn't think it was.
TONY: I've been in quite a few. You can tell by me medals can't you. I was in that little lot at Pondicherry last year.
ALAN: So was I.

TONY: You remember that one? Yes I recognise you. It was your lot again wasn't it?
ALAN: That's right.
TONY: Yes. You had a shorter beard then, didn't you.
ALAN: I've had a shave.
TONY; So anyway, I was captured and taken back to your hideout - just in time for the tortures.
ALAN: 9 o'clock wasn't it?
TONY: I've got to hand it to you blokes, you don't half think 'em up.

ALAN: Well, thank you.
TONY: Well anyway, your Chief comes over to me and says, "Here, I want to know the route of the relief column. Speak up dog". Well, that was like a red rag to a bull to me.
ALAN: It would be.
TONY: I mean you know what I'm like. I'm only a little man - hard to rouse. Takes a lot to upset me...and that did.
ALAN: Of course it did.
TONY: I was in there,
ALAN: I don't blame you.
TONY: I said, "You can't talk to me like that. I'm a British soldier. Less of the old buck".
ALAN: Good for you.
TONY: Well - that shook him.
ALAN: I remember.
TONY: His curly toed slippers nearly straightened out. The last thing he expected was me to answer back. It impressed him.
ALAN: It would, he's like that.
TONY: He could see he was dealing with a man. He knew he wouldn't get any answers out of me talking to me like that.
ALAN: It was obvious.
TONY: A smile of respect came over his face. He looked at me - just like I'm looking at you now - and fierce, uneducated savage though he was, do you know what he did?
ALAN: No.
TONY: He cut me ears off.

SIDNEY: Faversham, back to your post! The Afghans are attacking again.

EFFECTS: (BATTLE NOISES)

BILL: Well, this is it. They're making a final all out assault.

SIDNEY: We'll never hold them. This time they're heading straight for us.

MOIRA: Just a minute - who's that man on horseback leading the attack?

TONY: Good heavens, it's a white man. He's firing at us.

SIDNEY: That look of anger on his face - he's really determined to get us.

BILL: I don't wonder after this.

TONY: Why, who is it?

BILL: Somerset Maugham.

TONY: Run for your lives!

EFFECTS: (BATTLE NOISES UP & MERGING IN WITH….)

GRAMS: "CLOSING THEME" (UP & UNDER)

ADRIAN: You have been listening to "Hancock's Half Hour", featuring the lad himself, with Moira Lister, Bill Kerr and Sidney James. Incidental music was composed by Wally Stott and recorded by the BBC Augmented Revue Orchestra, conducted by Harry Rabinowitz. The script was written by Ray Galton & Alan Simpson - and the programme, which was recorded, was produced by Dennis Main Wilson.

GRAMS: "HANCOCK THEME" UP & TO END

(SEGUE)

GRAMS: PLAYOUT - TO END